A CLONE CONSPIRACY TIE-IN

#1

NOW

THE

RYAN • CAMPBELL • SALTARES

PROWLER

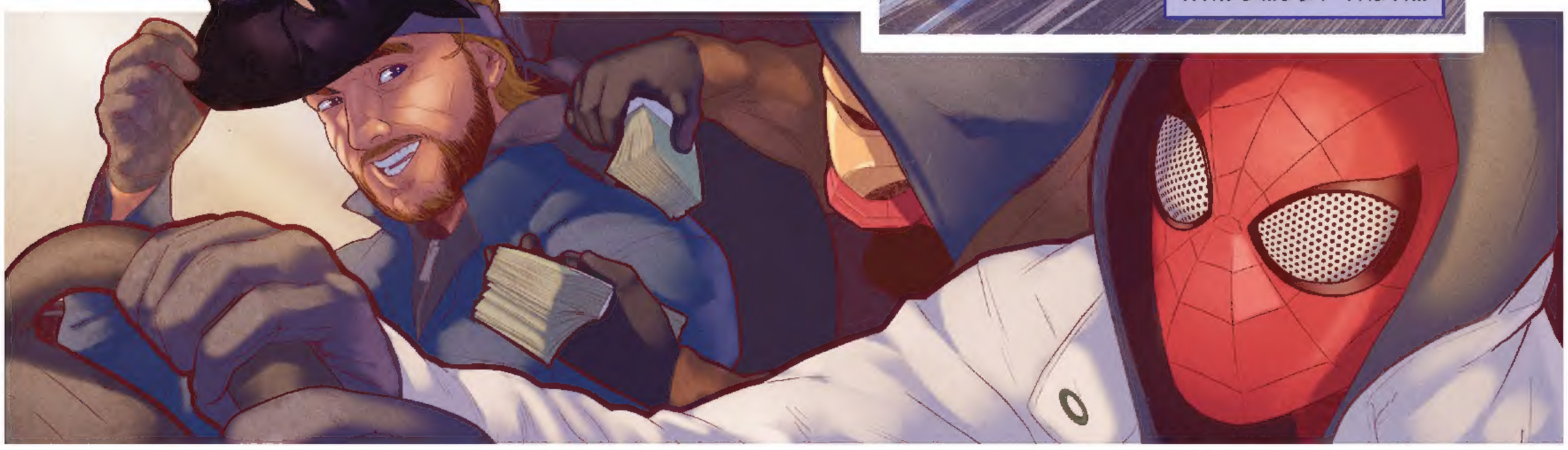
#1

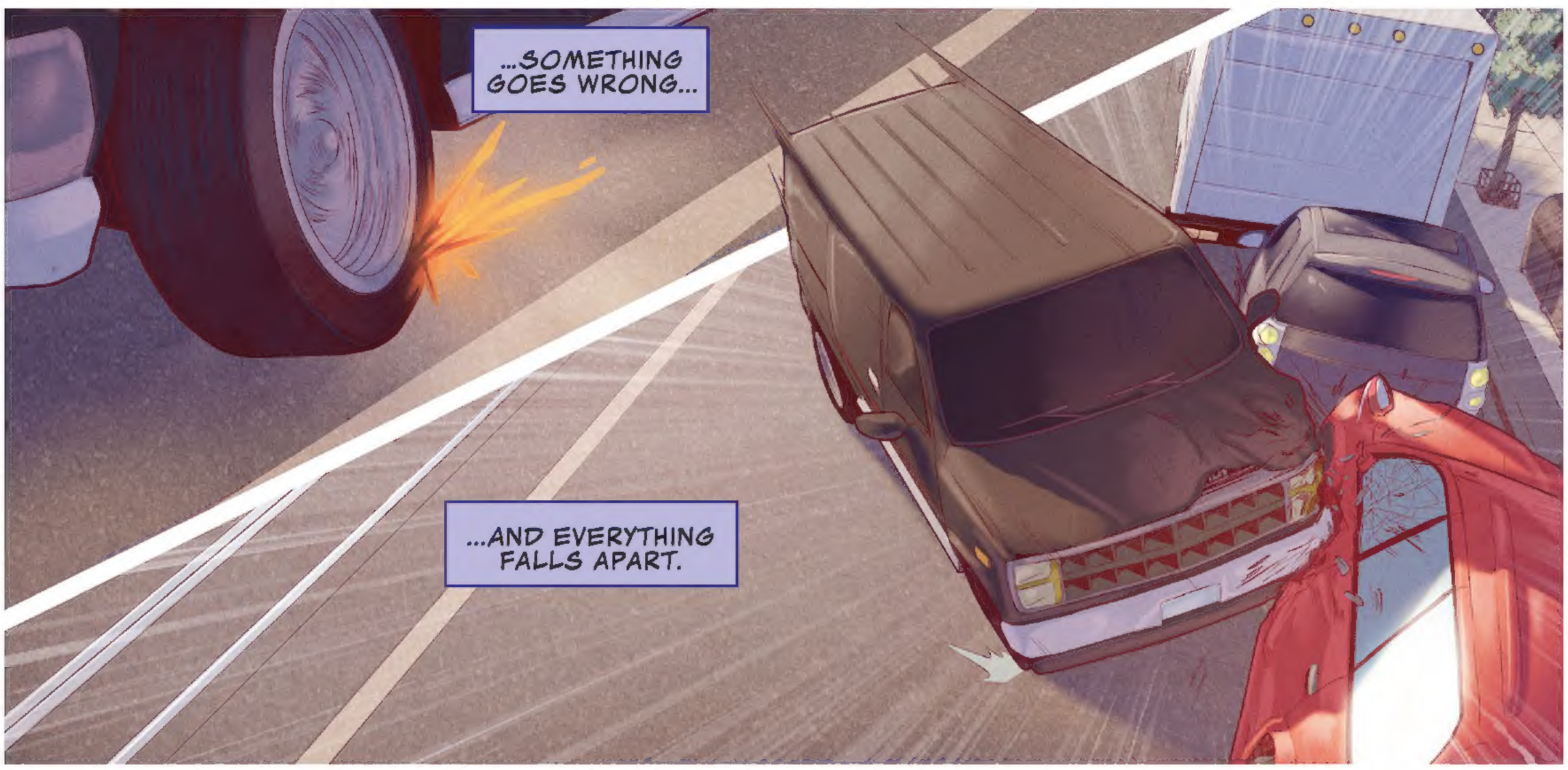
MARVEL

FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF SAN FRANCISCO.
8:58 A.M.
SO, HERE I AM AGAIN.

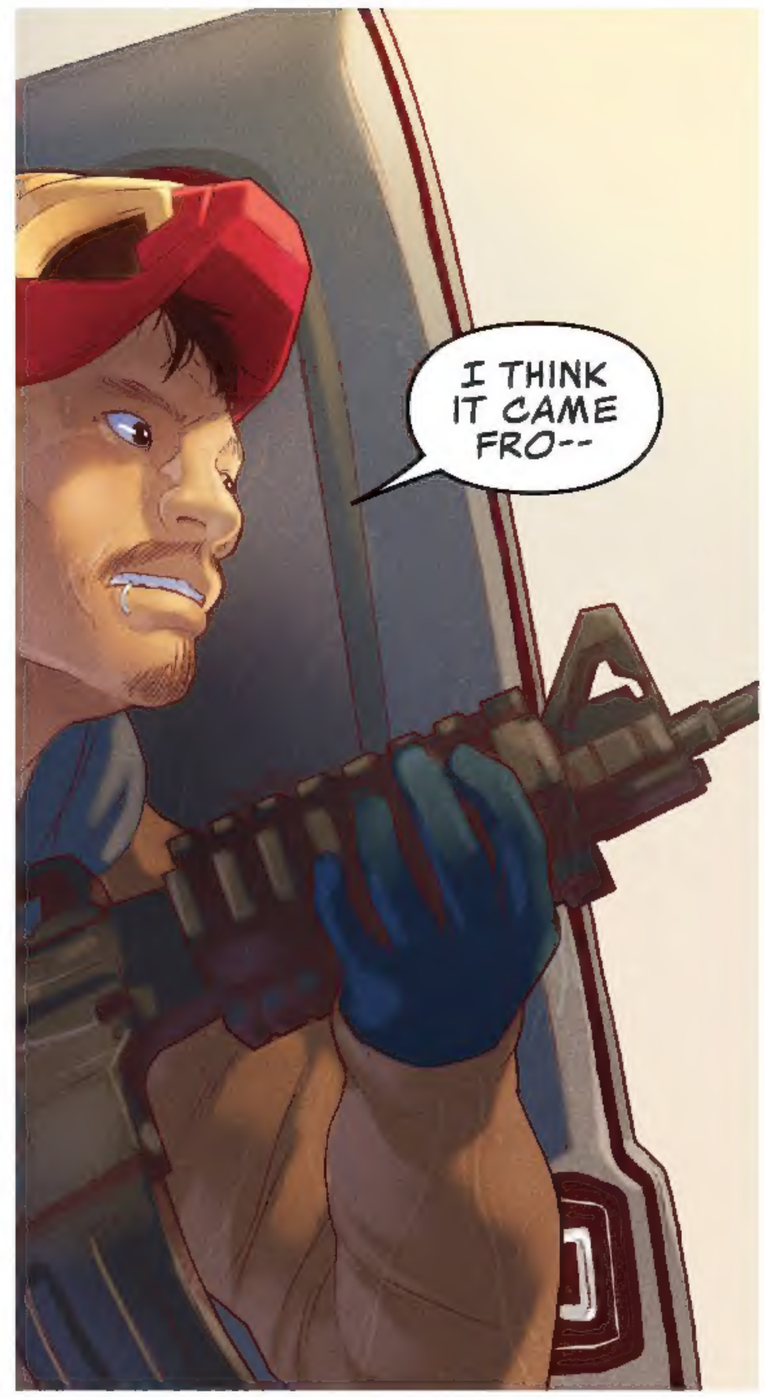
REEMERGING WITH SOME NEW PURPOSE OR MISSION.

IT GOES OKAY FOR A LITTLE WHILE...BUT THEN...




...SOMETHING GOES WRONG...
...AND EVERYTHING FALLS APART.

MAYBE I RUSH INTO THINGS.
WHAT WAS THAT? YOU GUYS SEE ANYTHING?


I THINK IT CAME FRO--

MAYBE I JUMP IN HEADFIRST WITHOUT THINKING.
CRASH

I GUESS I GET CAUGHT UP IN THE EXCITEMENT.
NYARGH!

OH MAN, OH MAN, OH MA--
AM I RUNNING AWAY FROM SOMETHING?

OR JUST GRASPING FOR ANYTHING THAT'S OUT IN FRONT OF ME?

ALL I KNOW IS...
...I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M DOING.

HEY! WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED HERE?
BANK ROBBERY. AN ATTEMPTED ONE, AT LEAST.
WOW. NICE WORK.

HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO YOU ARE.
I HAVE TO GO.

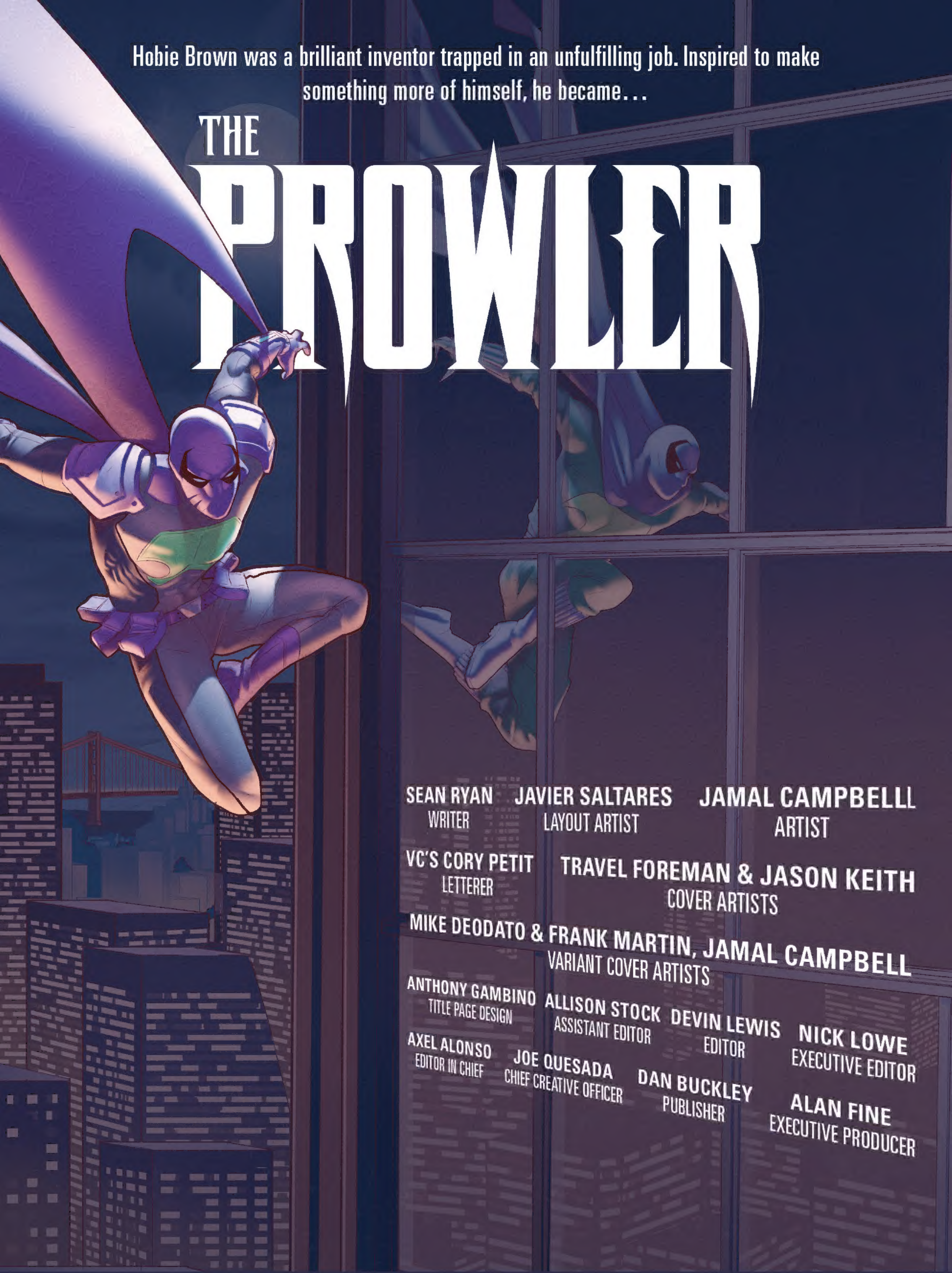
WAITASEC! WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO TELL THE OTHER GUYS AT THE PRECINCT?
ARE YOU SAN FRANCISCO'S NEWEST SUPER HERO?

NO. I'M NOT A HERO.
HUH?

THEN WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU?

Hobie Brown was a brilliant inventor trapped in an unfulfilling job. Inspired to make something more of himself, he became...

THE PROWLER



SEAN RYAN
WRITER

JAVIER SALTARES
LAYOUT ARTIST

JAMAL CAMPBELLL
ARTIST

VC'S CORY PETIT
LETTERER

TRAVEL FOREMAN & JASON KEITH
COVER ARTISTS

MIKE DEODATO & FRANK MARTIN, JAMAL CAMPBELL
VARIANT COVER ARTISTS

ANTHONY GAMBINO
TITLE PAGE DESIGN

ALLISON STOCK
ASSISTANT EDITOR

DEVIN LEWIS
EDITOR

NICK LOWE
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ALAN FINE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

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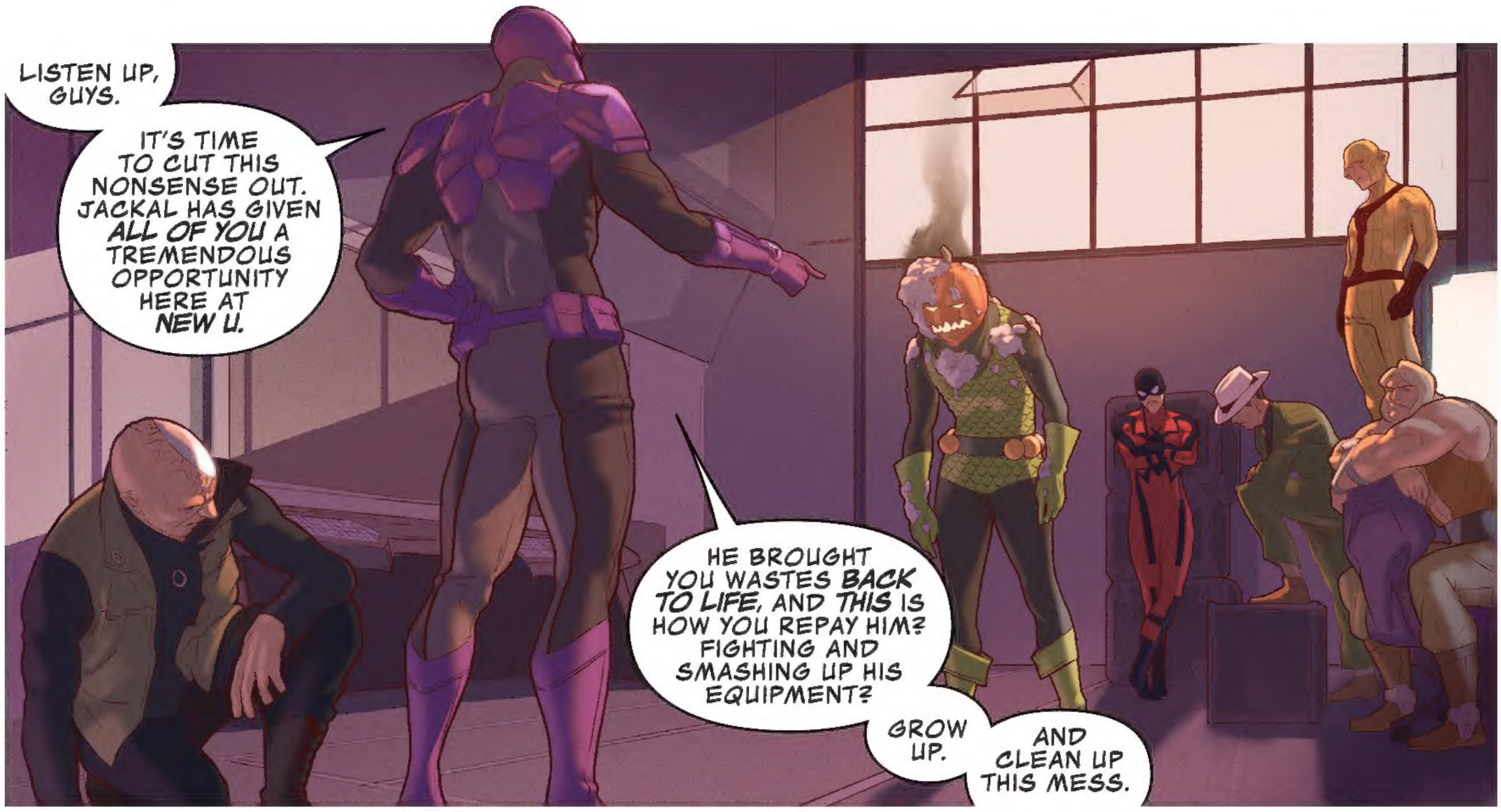
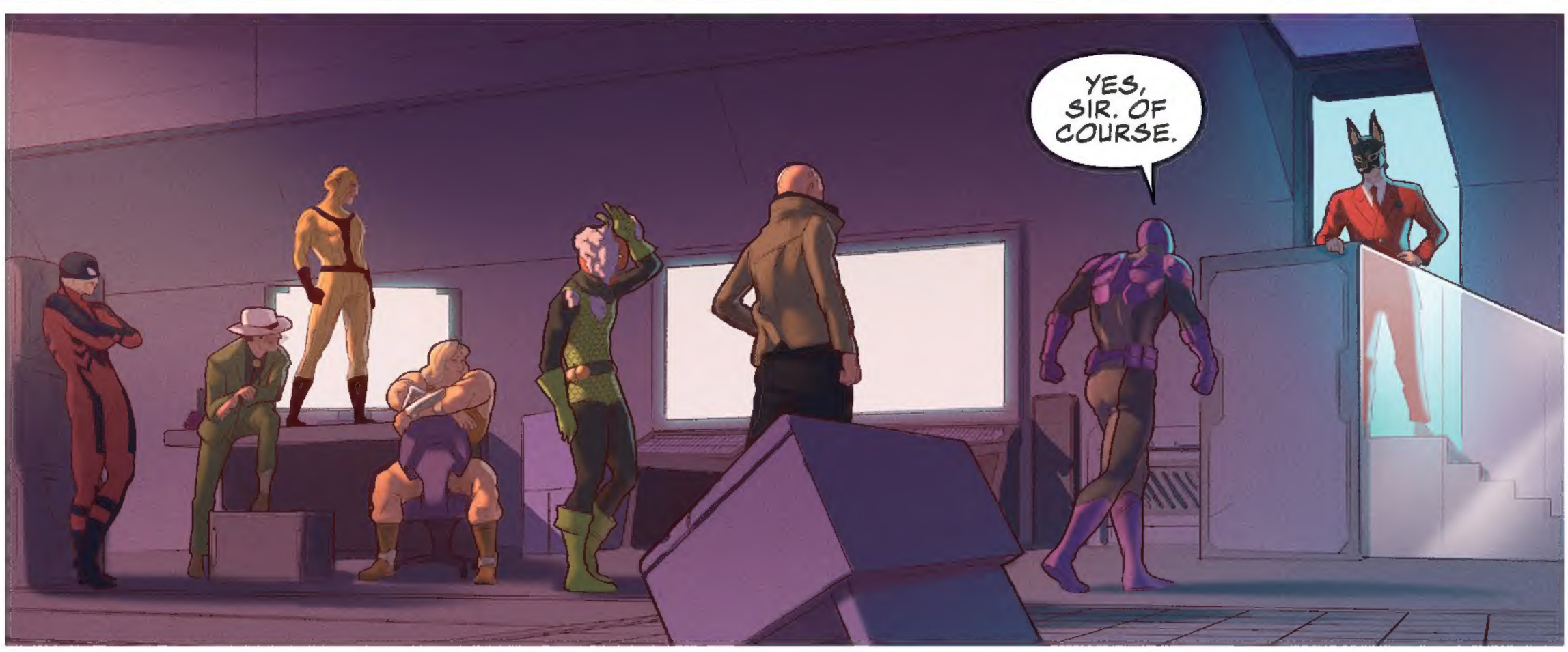
SAY THAT AGAIN!!
YOU WATCH YOUR MOUTH, JACK O'LANTERN. OR I'LL SCOOP YOUR BRAINS RIGHT OUT OF THAT PUMPKIN HEAD OF YOURS!
THAT'S IT! I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOU!
ALL RIGHT, FINALLY, SOME ACTION AROUND THIS PLACE!
NOW, THAT'S ENOUGH!
OUT OF MY WAY, PROWLER! I'M GOING TO KILL HIM!
LIGHTS OUT, JACK O'LANTERN.


LISTEN UP, GUYS.
IT'S TIME TO CUT THIS NONSENSE OUT. JACKAL HAS GIVEN ALL OF YOU A TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITY HERE AT NEW U.
HE BROUGHT YOU WASTES BACK TO LIFE, AND THIS IS HOW YOU REPAY HIM? FIGHTING AND SMASHING UP HIS EQUIPMENT?
GROW UP.
AND CLEAN UP THIS MESS.

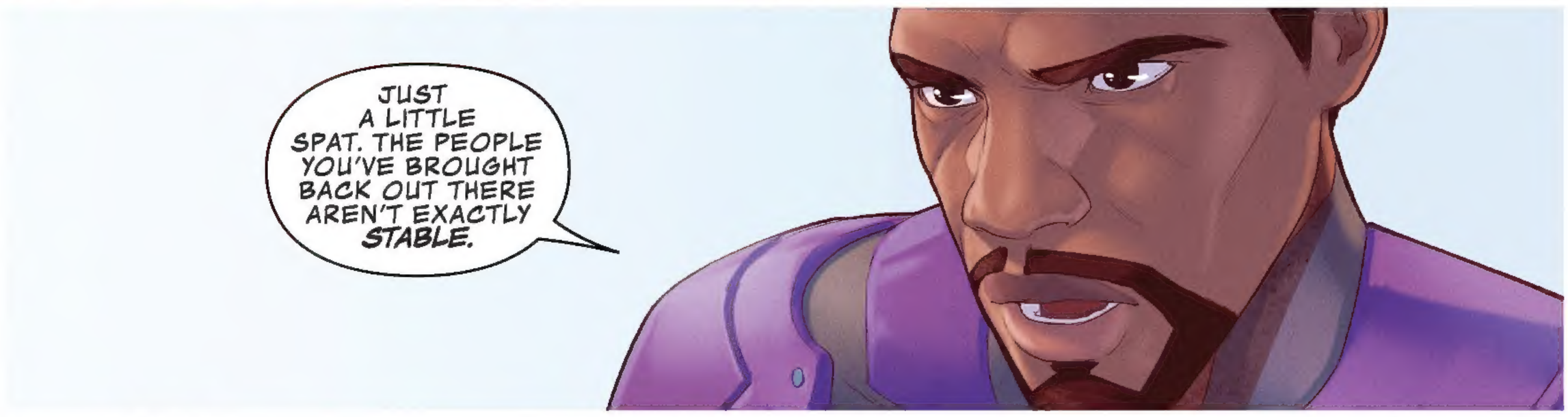
WHY THE HELL SHOULD WE EVEN LISTEN TO YOU?
EXCUSE ME?
AREN'T YOU IN CAHOOTS WITH SPIDER-MAN? HEARD YOU'VE BEEN MOONLIGHTING AS HIS LACKEY THESE DAYS.
HOW DO WE KNOW YOU AREN'T TELLING HIM THAT EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US IS DOWN HERE?

LISTEN TO ME.
I DON'T WORK FOR SPIDER-MAN.
I'M NO ONE'S LACKEY.

PROWLER! ENOUGH!
MY OFFICE. I NEED TO SPEAK WITH YOU.


YES, SIR. OF COURSE.

WHAT WAS GOING ON OUT THERE?

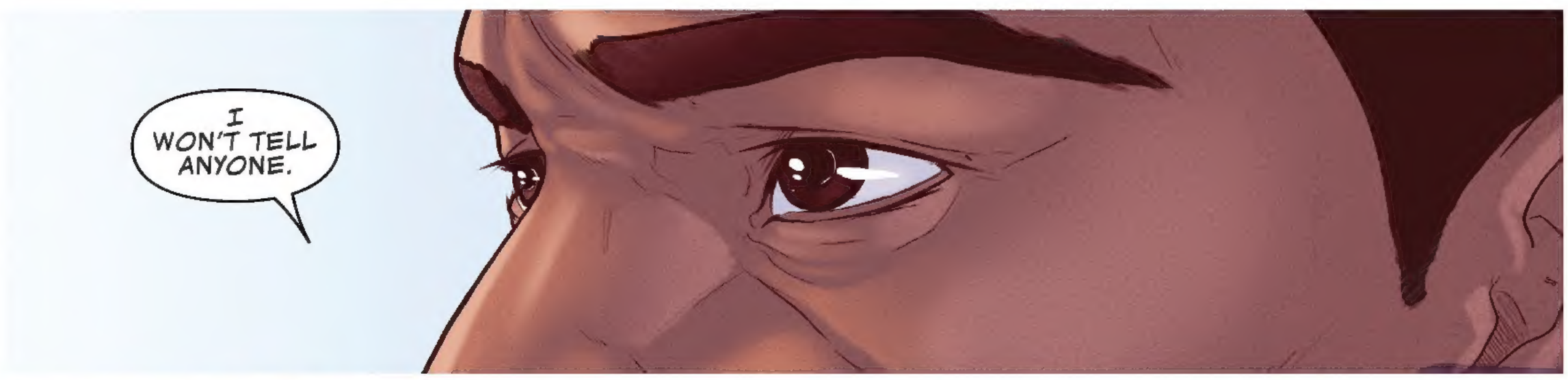

JUST A LITTLE SPAT. THE PEOPLE YOU'VE BROUGHT BACK OUT THERE AREN'T EXACTLY STABLE.

I KNOW-- THAT'S WHY I HIRED YOU TO KEEP THEM IN LINE.
WHY WEREN'T YOU THERE TO STOP THAT FIGHT BEFORE IT STARTED?

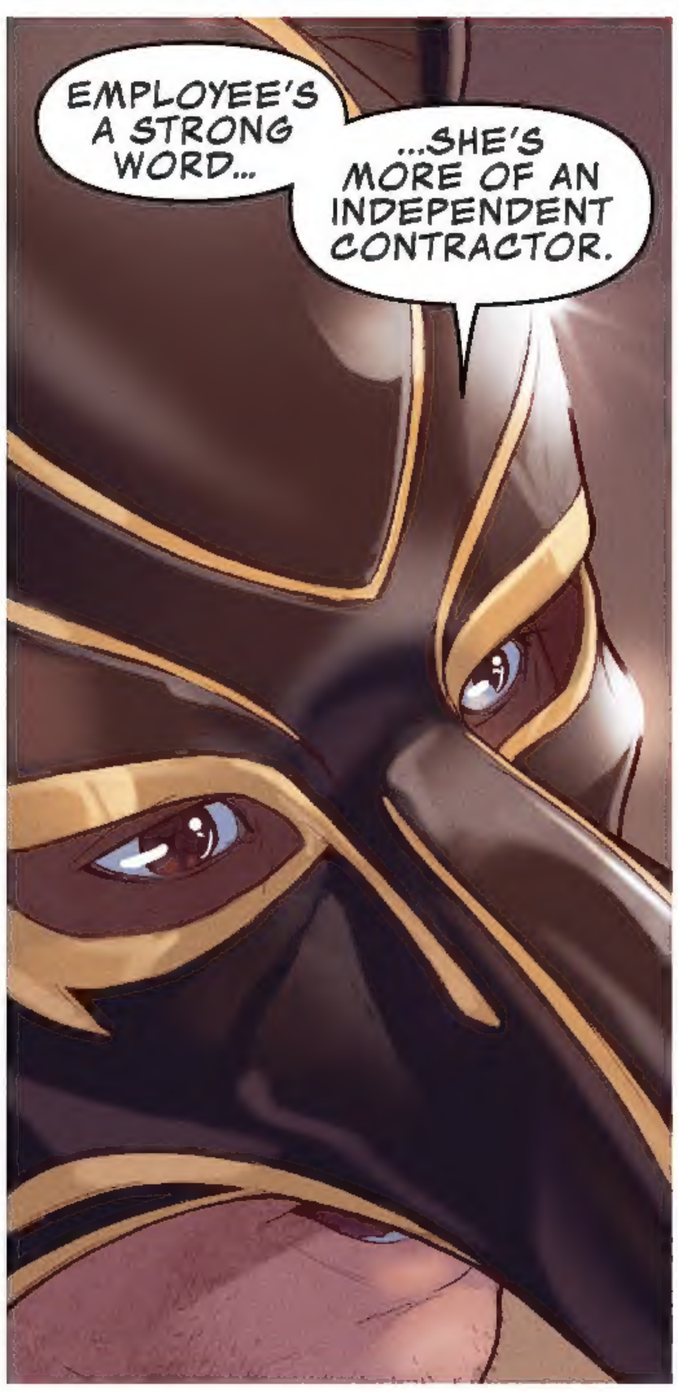
I WENT OUT LAST NIGHT. MADAME WEB TOLD ME ABOUT A BANK ROBBERY SHE FORESAW.
I WANTED TO BE BACK BEFORE EVERYONE GOT UP, BUT STOPPING THEM TOOK LONGER THAN EXPECTED.

:SIGH: I UNDERSTAND WHERE YOU'RE COMING FROM, HOBIE. REALLY, I DO, BUT YOU NEED TO TELL ME WHEN YOU LEAVE THESE PREMISES.

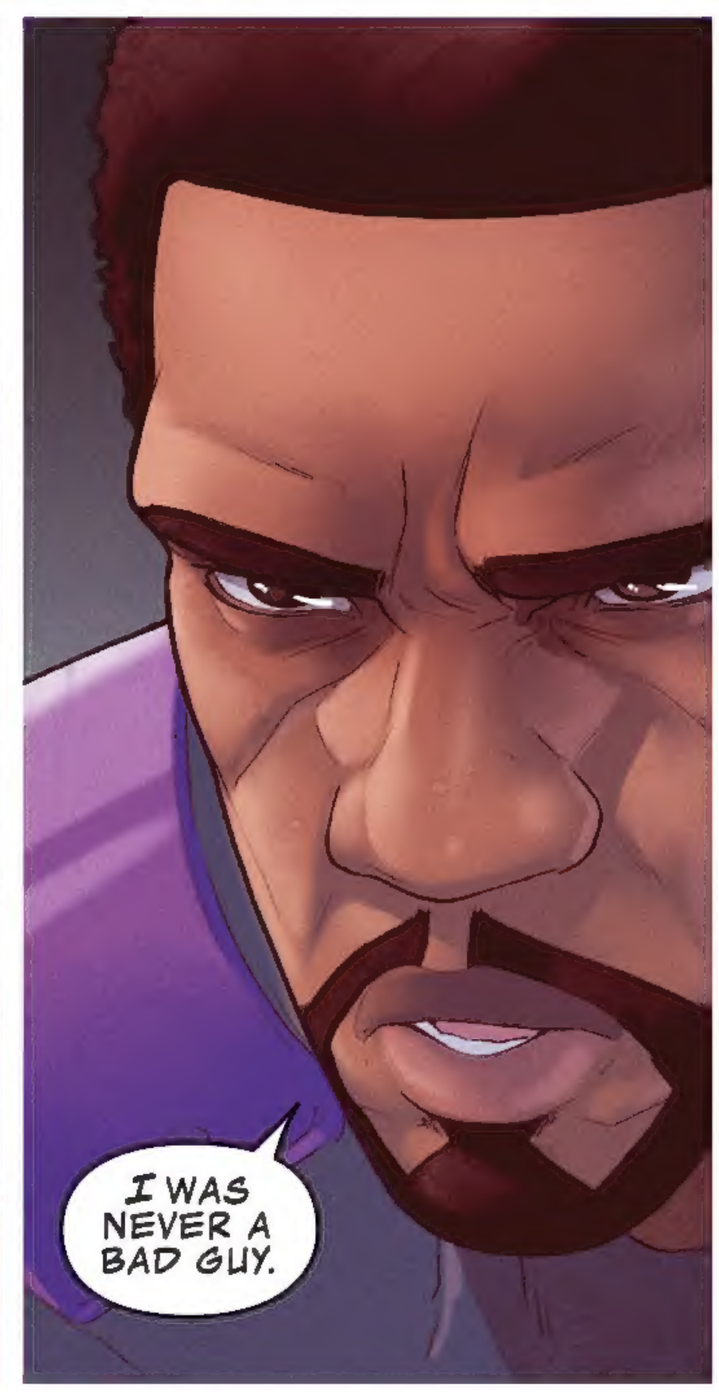
HOBIE, I THOUGHT YOU BELIEVED IN WHAT WE'RE DOING, HERE.
I DO, JACKAL. WHAT YOU'VE BUILT IS GOING TO CHANGE THE WORLD.
EXACTLY. THAT'S THE GOAL, AT LEAST. BUT THE TECHNOLOGY WE USE HERE CANNOT GET OUT BEFORE WE ARE READY.


I WON'T TELL ANYONE.

I KNOW, BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER. OR HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT YOU ARE THE EMBODIMENT OF THAT VERY TECHNOLOGY?
HOW COULD I FORGET? IT WAS YOUR EMPLOYEE, ELECTRO, WHO KILLED ME IN THE FIRST PLACE.


EMPLOYEE'S A STRONG WORD...
...SHE'S MORE OF AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR.

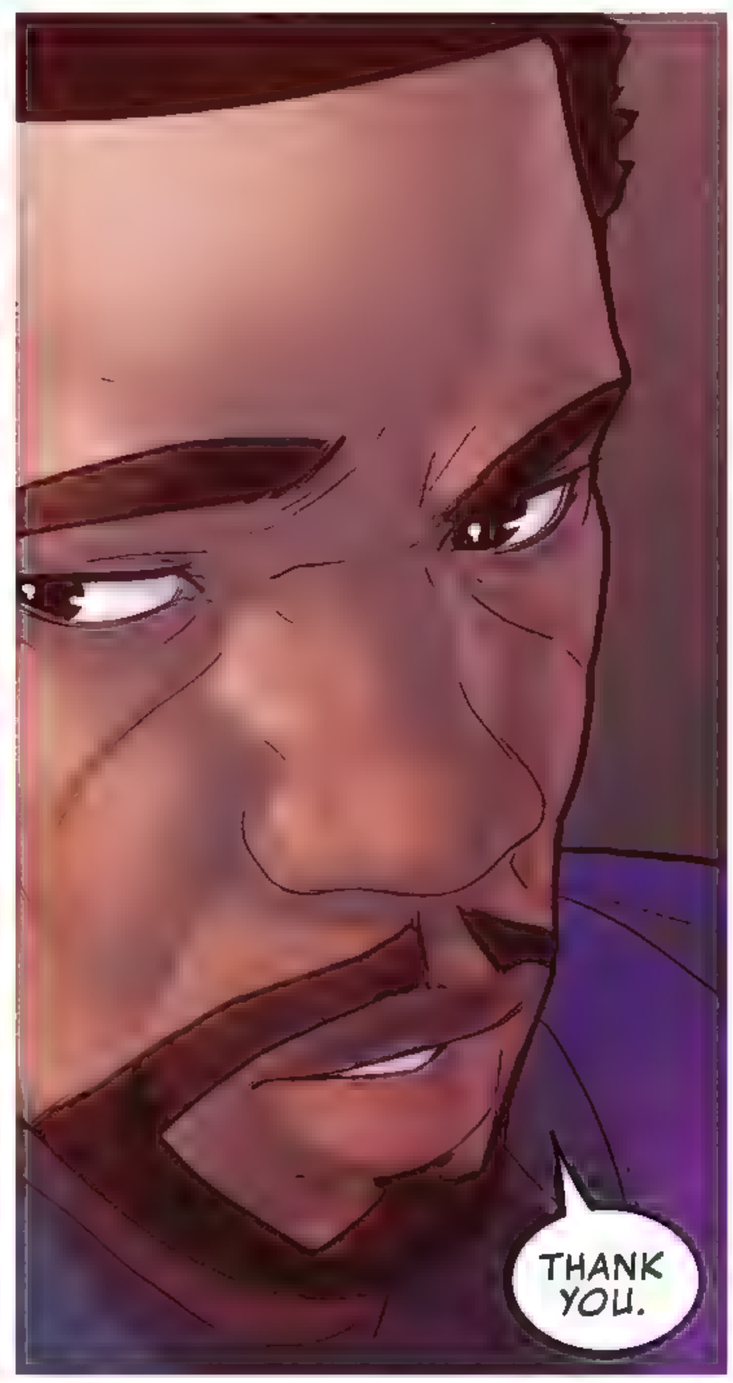
REGARDLESS, WE ALL AGREE THAT SHE SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT. YES, SHE CAN BE A BIT AGGRESSIVE, BUT WE'RE WORKING ON IT.
LIKE I'M WORKING ON ALL THOSE "UNSTABLE" FOLKS OUT THERE.
YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD APPRECIATE THE FRESH START I'M GIVING TO THOSE BAD GUYS.


I WAS NEVER A BAD GUY.

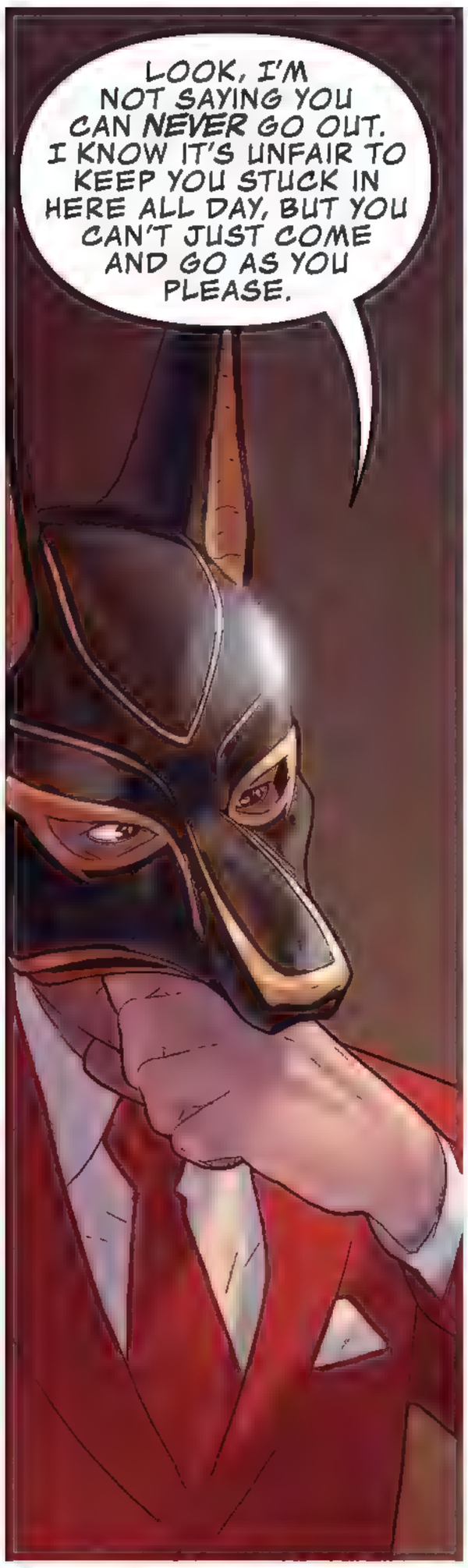
RIGHT, RIGHT. YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE.
BUT NOW, YOU ARE WHAT YOU ARE THANKS TO ME. YOU'RE ALIVE AND HEALTHY BECAUSE OF ME. YOU ARE NEW AND IMPROVED AND BETTER THAN EVER.

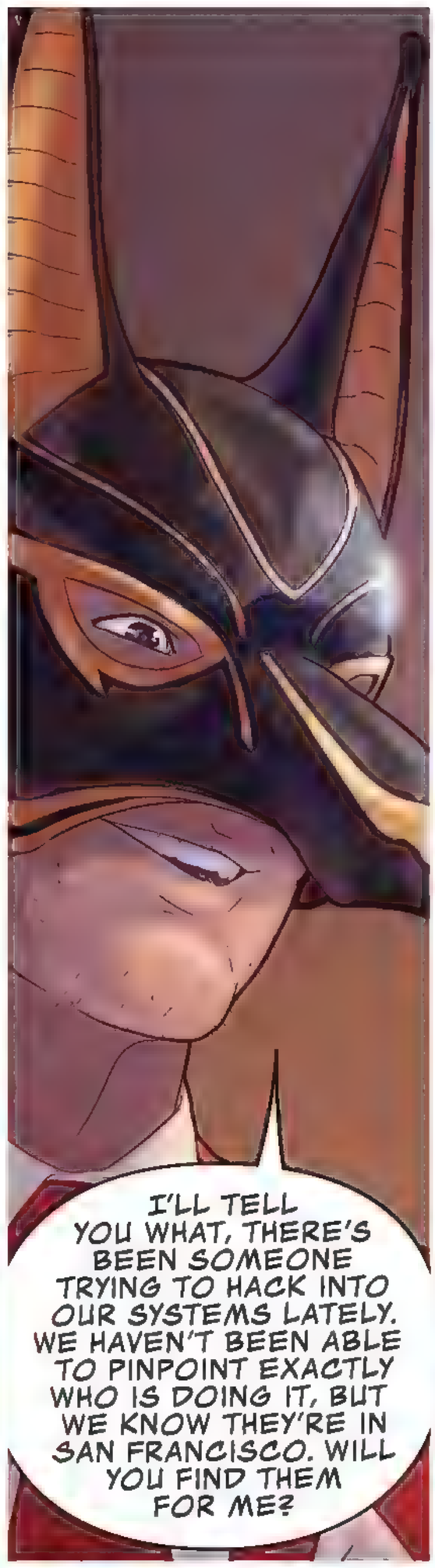
THOUGH, THAT REMINDS ME. HAVE YOU TAKEN YOUR MEDICATION TODAY?
OF COURSE, EVERY DAY.

GOOD. I CAN'T HAVE MY HEAD OF SECURITY FALLING TO PIECES ON ME.
YOU'RE VERY IMPORTANT TO ME, HOBIE.


THANK YOU.

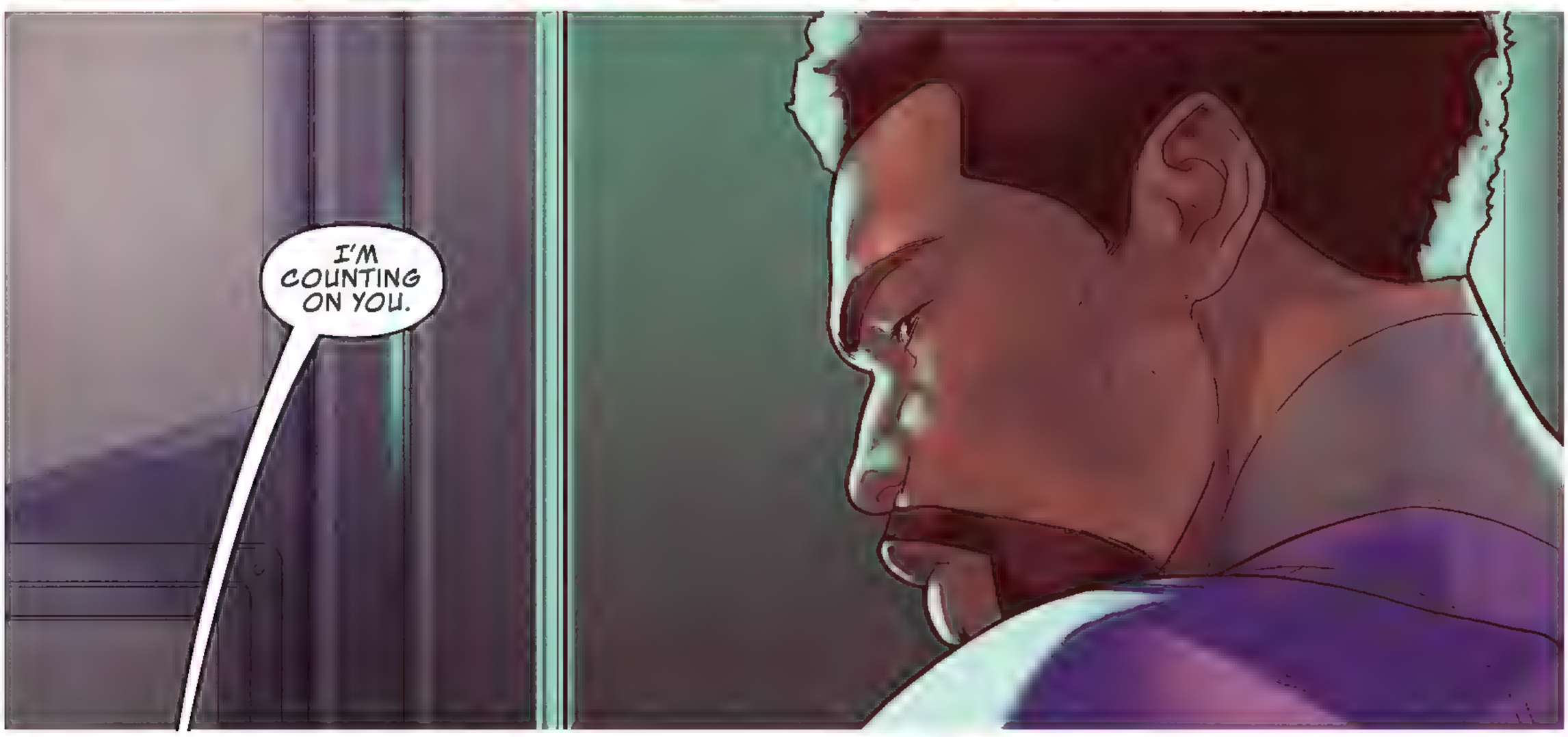
THAT'S WHY YOU GOING OUT WITHOUT TELLING ME MAKES ME SO NERVOUS. I CAN'T RISK SOMETHING HAPPENING TO YOU.
SORRY. MADAME WEB TOLD ME ABOUT THE ROBBERY, AND I COULDN'T JUST SIT HERE AND DO NOTHING. BESIDES, I NEED TO GET OUT OF THIS PLACE EVERY NOW AND THEN. I CAN GET PRETTY STIR CRAZY IN HERE.


LOOK, I'M NOT SAYING YOU CAN NEVER GO OUT. I KNOW IT'S UNFAIR TO KEEP YOU STUCK IN HERE ALL DAY, BUT YOU CAN'T JUST COME AND GO AS YOU PLEASE.


I'LL TELL YOU WHAT, THERE'S BEEN SOMEONE TRYING TO HACK INTO OUR SYSTEMS LATELY. WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO PINPOINT EXACTLY WHO IS DOING IT, BUT WE KNOW THEY'RE IN SAN FRANCISCO. WILL YOU FIND THEM FOR ME?

OKAY. SURE THING.
MADAME WEB HAS BEEN TRACKING THE SITUATION. TALK TO HER. HOPEFULLY SHE CAN POINT YOU IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

THANK YOU, HOBIE.


I'M COUNTING ON YOU.

CASSANDRA WEBB.

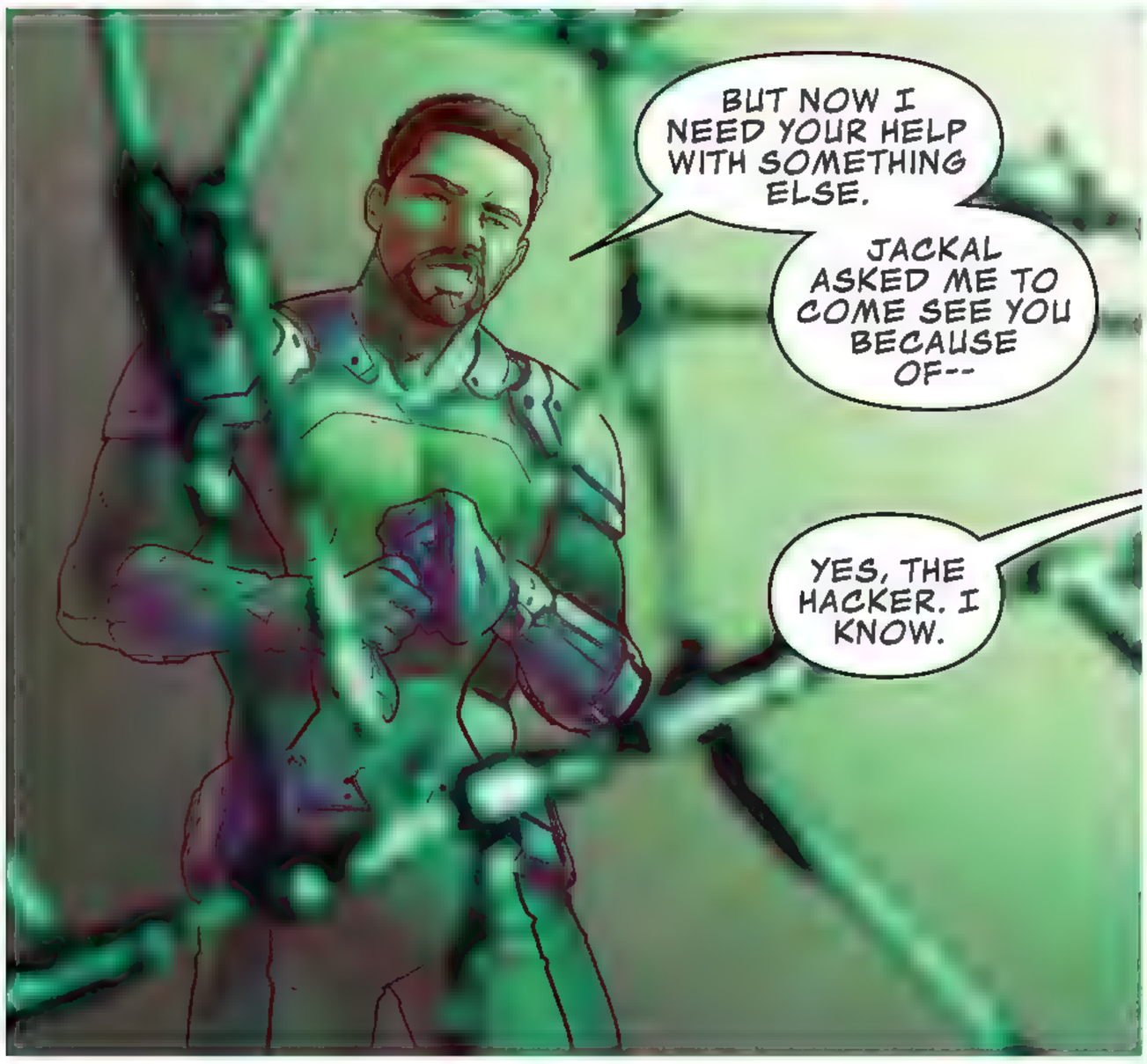
ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL *CLAIRVOYANTS* IN THE WORLD. KNOWS WHO'S CALLING BEFORE THE PHONE RINGS, WHEN A CRIME IS GOING TO HAPPEN BEFORE IT DOES, THAT KIND OF THING. GOT KILLED BY THE *KRAVINOFF* FAMILY A COUPLE YEARS AGO. JACKAL BROUGHT HER BACK.

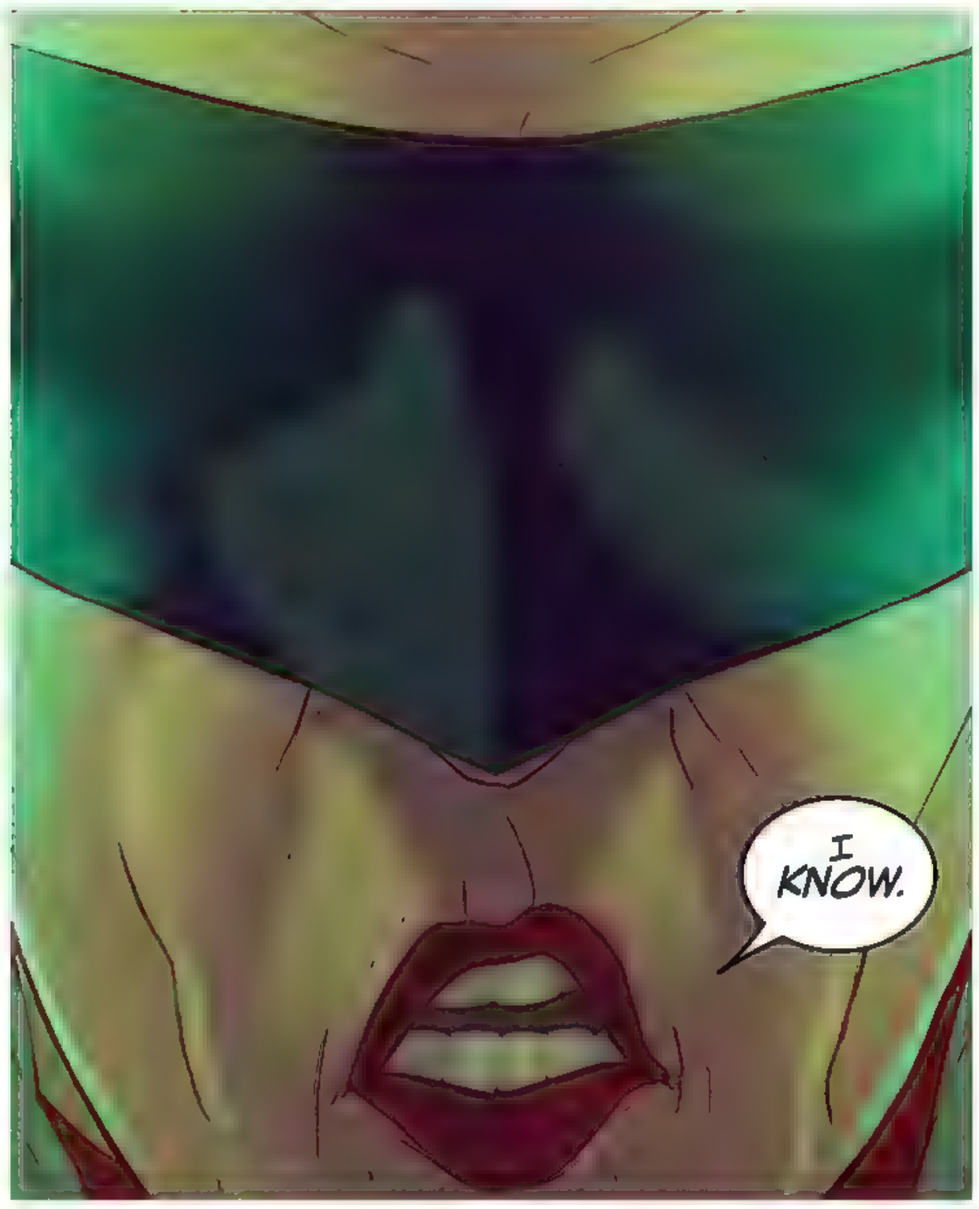
SPOOKS THE HELL OUTTA M--

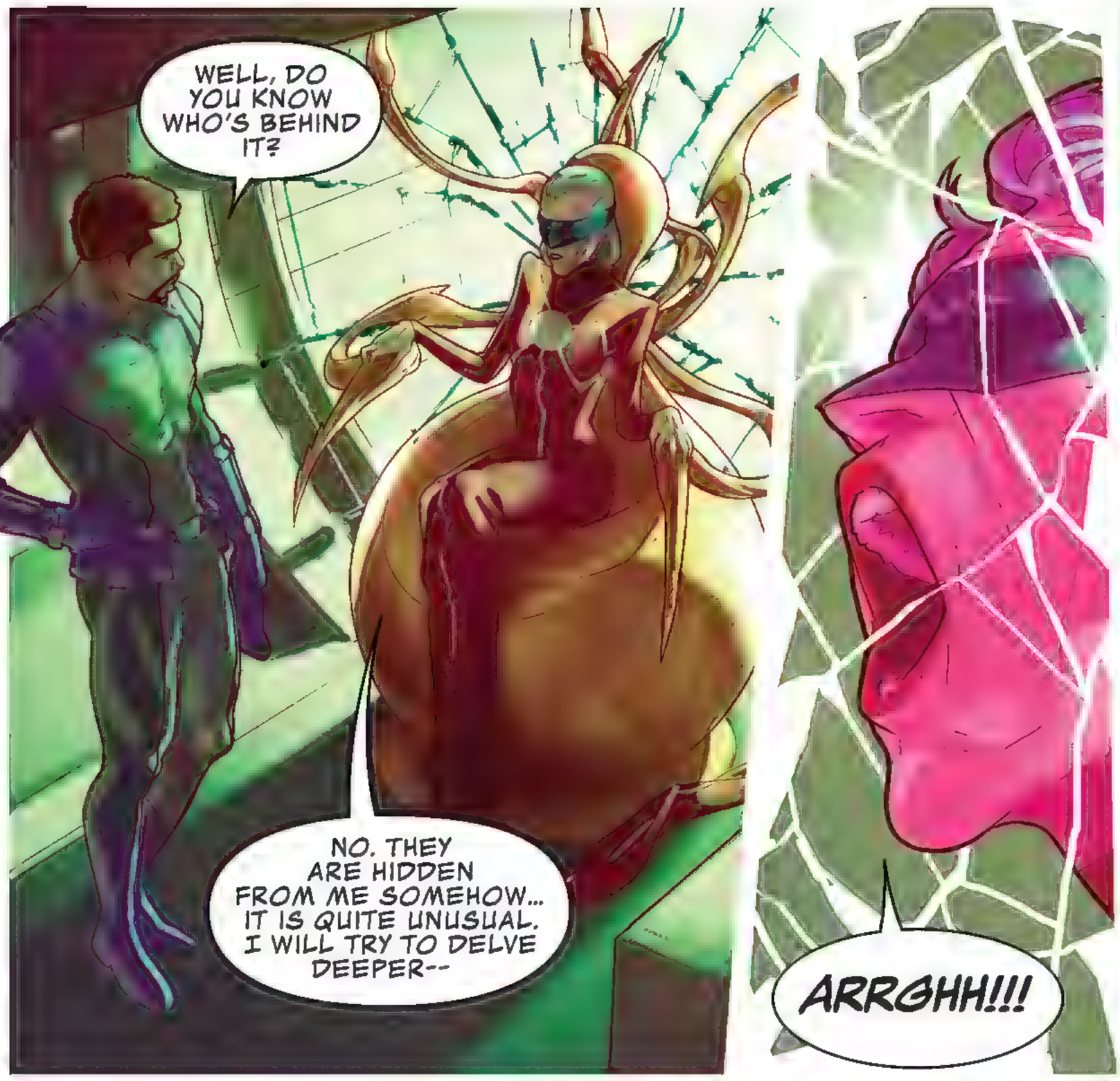
HOBIE BROWN.

PLEASE, COME IN. I SAW YOU STOPPED THE ROBBERY THIS MORNING. WELL DONE.

THANKS.



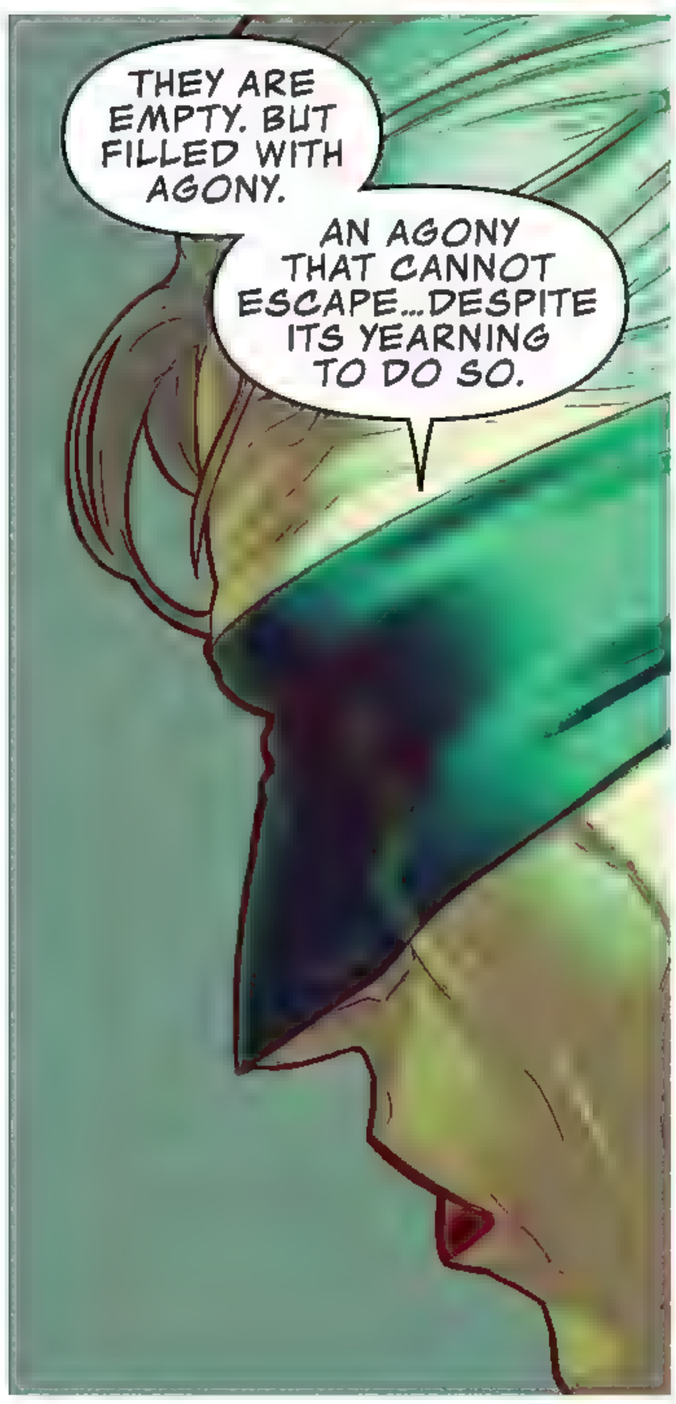


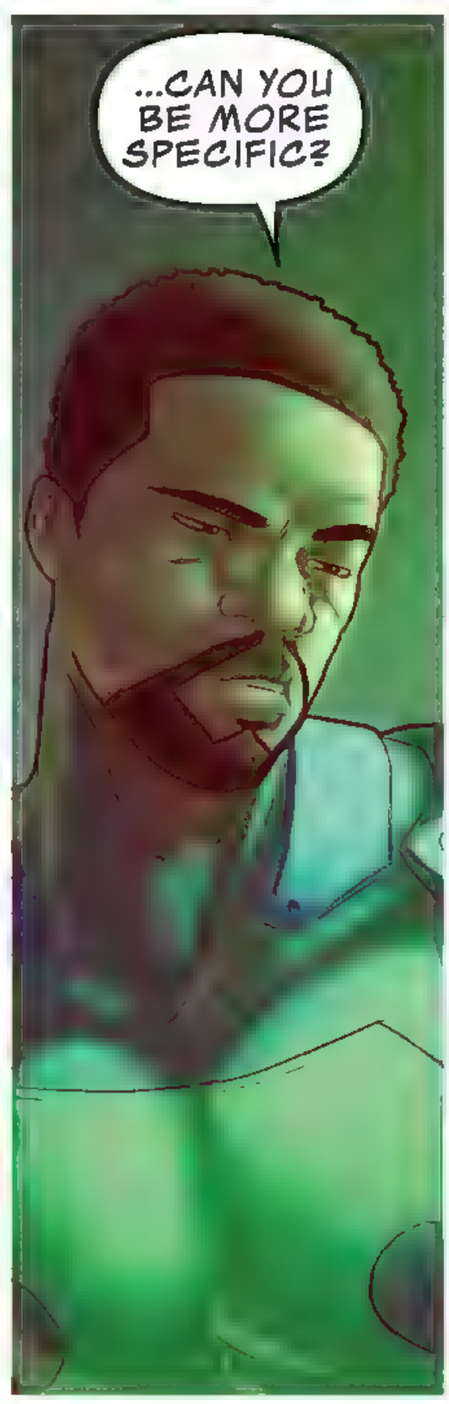

WELL, DO YOU KNOW WHO'S BEHIND IT?
NO. THEY ARE HIDDEN FROM ME SOMEHOW... IT IS QUITE UNUSUAL. I WILL TRY TO DELVE DEEPER--

ARRGHH!!!

ARE YOU OKAY? WHAT HAPPENED?
SOME KIND OF TELEPATHIC FEEDBACK.
I HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED THAT BEFORE.

DID YOU GET ANYTHING?
I SEE A COLLECTION OF BUILDINGS.
SURROUNDED BY BLACK.

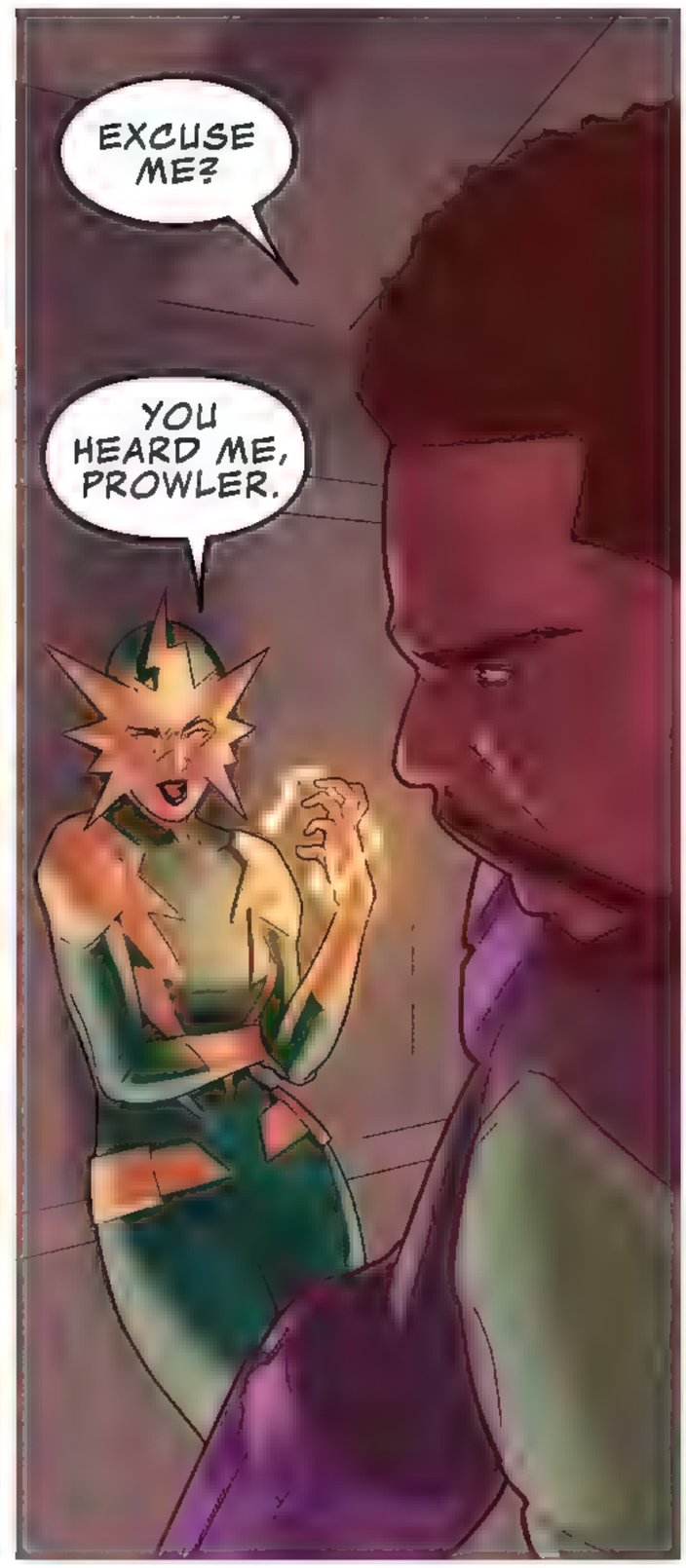

THEY ARE EMPTY. BUT FILLED WITH AGONY.
AN AGONY THAT CANNOT ESCAPE...DESPITE ITS YEARNING TO DO SO.


...CAN YOU BE MORE SPECIFIC?

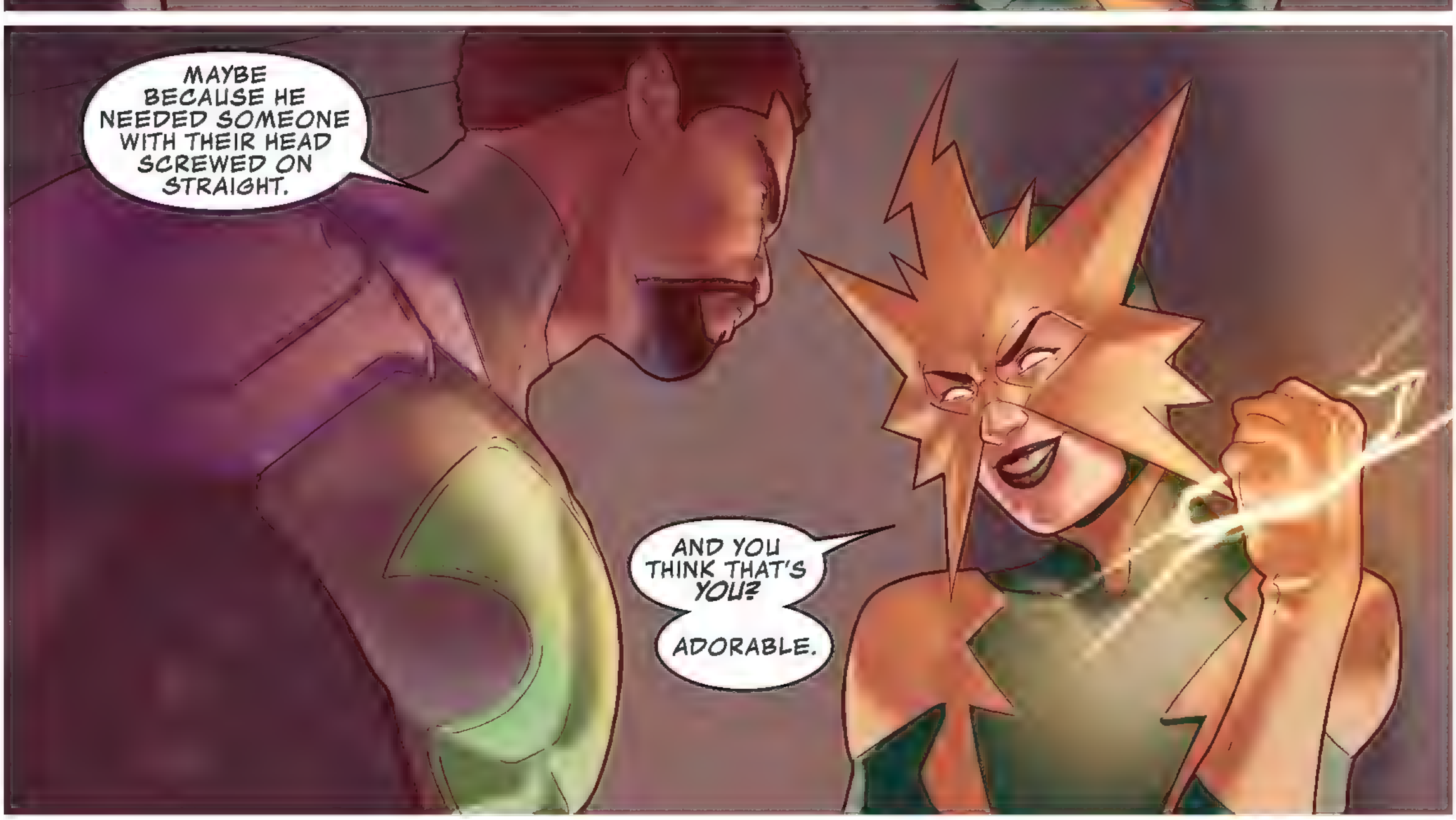
NO.
THAT IS ALL I CAN SEE RIGHT NOW.

RUNNING OFF AGAIN?
I'VE GOT A JOB TO DO.
RIGHT. THE DUTIFUL, LOYAL WORKER.

FOR NOW.


EXCUSE ME?
YOU HEARD ME, PROWLER.

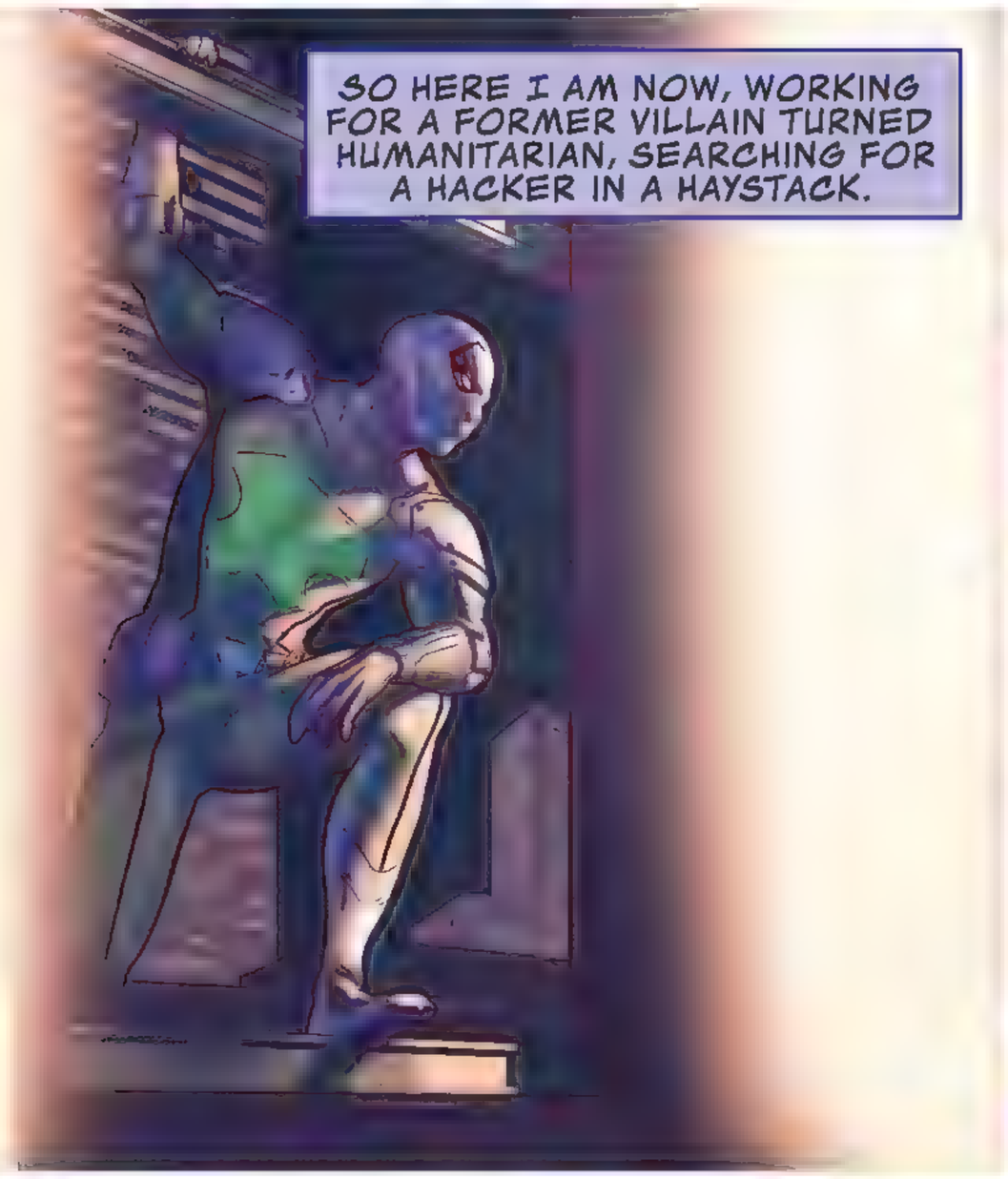
I REALLY HAVE NO IDEA WHY JACKAL BROUGHT YOU BACK.


MAYBE BECAUSE HE NEEDED SOMEONE WITH THEIR HEAD SCREWED ON STRAIGHT.
AND YOU THINK THAT'S *YOU*?
ADORABLE.

I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS.
DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE?
I'VE GOT A JOB TO DO.
OF COURSE.
HAPPY HUNTING!
I HOPE YOU FIND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!

I'VE BEEN SEARCHING MY WHOLE LIFE.
WHEN I WAS A YOUNG MAN, I WAS SEARCHING FOR AN INVENTION THAT WOULD LAUNCH ME INTO FAME AND OUT OF MY BORING WINDOW WASHER JOB.
THAT DIDN'T WORK OUT, SO I TURNED TO CRIME TO GET ATTENTION AND GLORY. IT'S WHEN I FIRST DECIDED TO BECOME THE PROWLER.
BUT I DIDN'T REALLY HAVE THE STOMACH FOR THE LIFE OF A CRIMINAL, SO I TURNED TO THE LIGHT, AND STARTED HELPING OUT SPIDER-MAN. I WOULD DRESS UP AS HIM TO HELP PROTECT HIS SECRET IDENTITY.
EVENTUALLY, THOUGH, I BELIEVED THAT I NEEDED TO SETTLE DOWN. I GOT MYSELF A STEADY JOB AS A CONSTRUCTION WORKER AND EVEN GOT MARRIED TO A WOMAN NAMED MINDY.
BUT I WAS JUST FOOLING MYSELF. I COULDN'T STAY AWAY FROM PROWLER FOR LONG, AND SOON I HAD JOINED A MERCENARY GROUP WITH OTHER REFORMED CRIMINALS.
LIVING AS PROWLER PROVED TOO MUCH OF A DRAW TO ME. I BECAME OBSESSED WITH IT, IGNORING THE REST OF MY LIFE, INCLUDING MINDY. SHE LEFT ME.
I SHOULD HAVE CHOSEN HER. BUT INSTEAD, I CHOSE PROWLER.
THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS, THOUGH, HAVE BEEN...SLOW, TO SAY THE LEAST.
AND JUST RECENTLY, WHERE WAS I? BACK AGAIN, IMPERSONATING SPIDER-MAN.
THAT WAS UNTIL HE SENT ME TO INVESTIGATE NEW U, WHERE I WAS, KILLED BY SOME NEW ELECTRO.

THE JACKAL BROUGHT ME BACK, THOUGH. NEW BODY, NEW LIFE, NEW MISSION.
SAN FRANCISCO

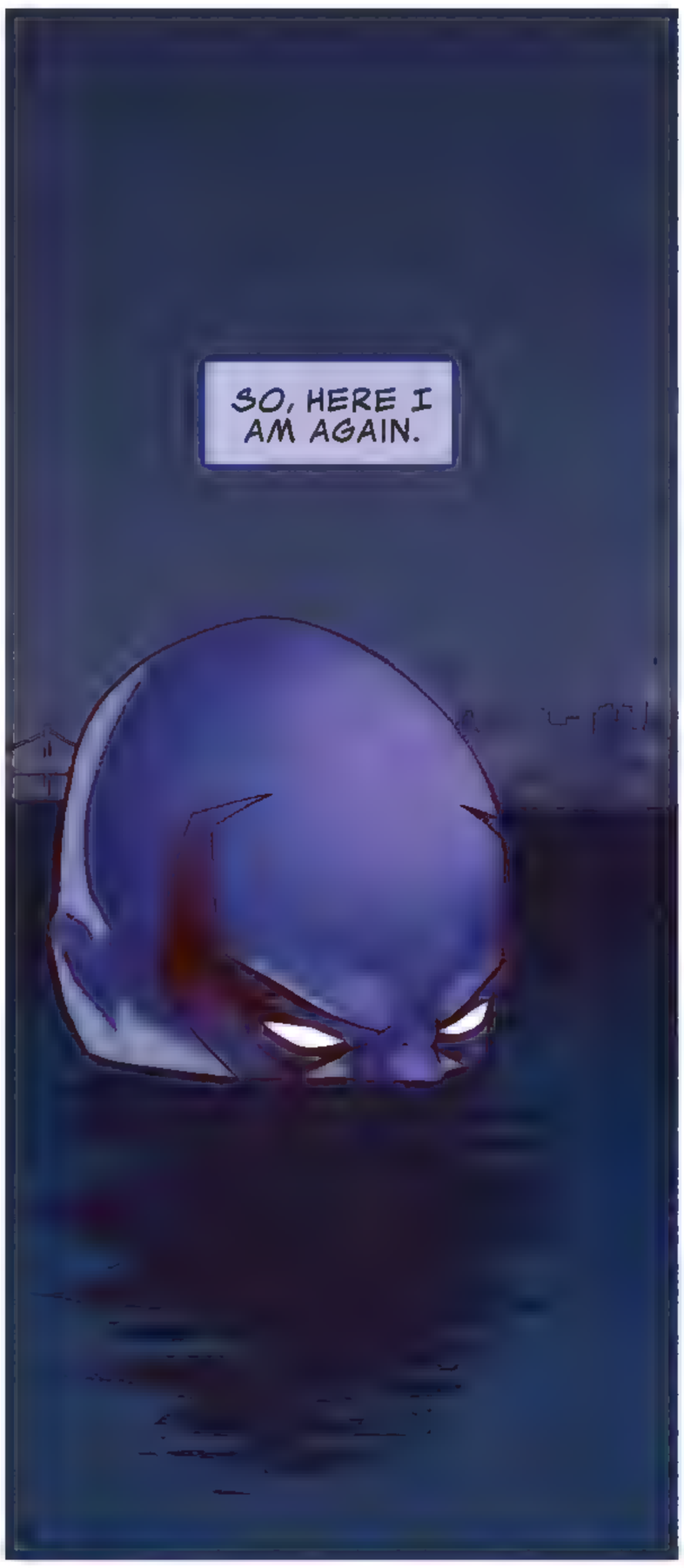

SO HERE I AM NOW, WORKING FOR A FORMER VILLAIN TURNED HUMANITARIAN, SEARCHING FOR A HACKER IN A HAYSTACK.

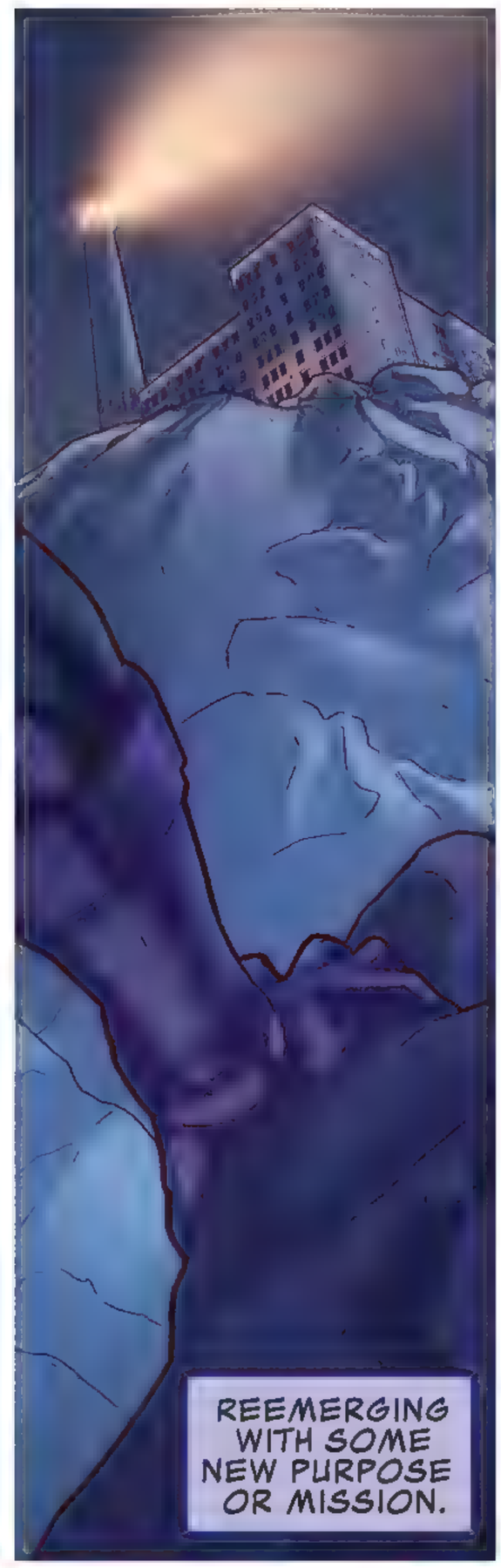
HOPING LIKE ALWAYS THAT WHAT I'M SEARCHING FOR WILL JUST MAGICALLY APPEAR BEFORE ME...

BUILDINGS.

SURROUNDED BY BLACK.

FILLED WITH AGONY THAT CAN'T ESCAPE.


SO, HERE I AM AGAIN.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IT GOES OKAY FOR A LITTLE WHILE...BUT THEN...

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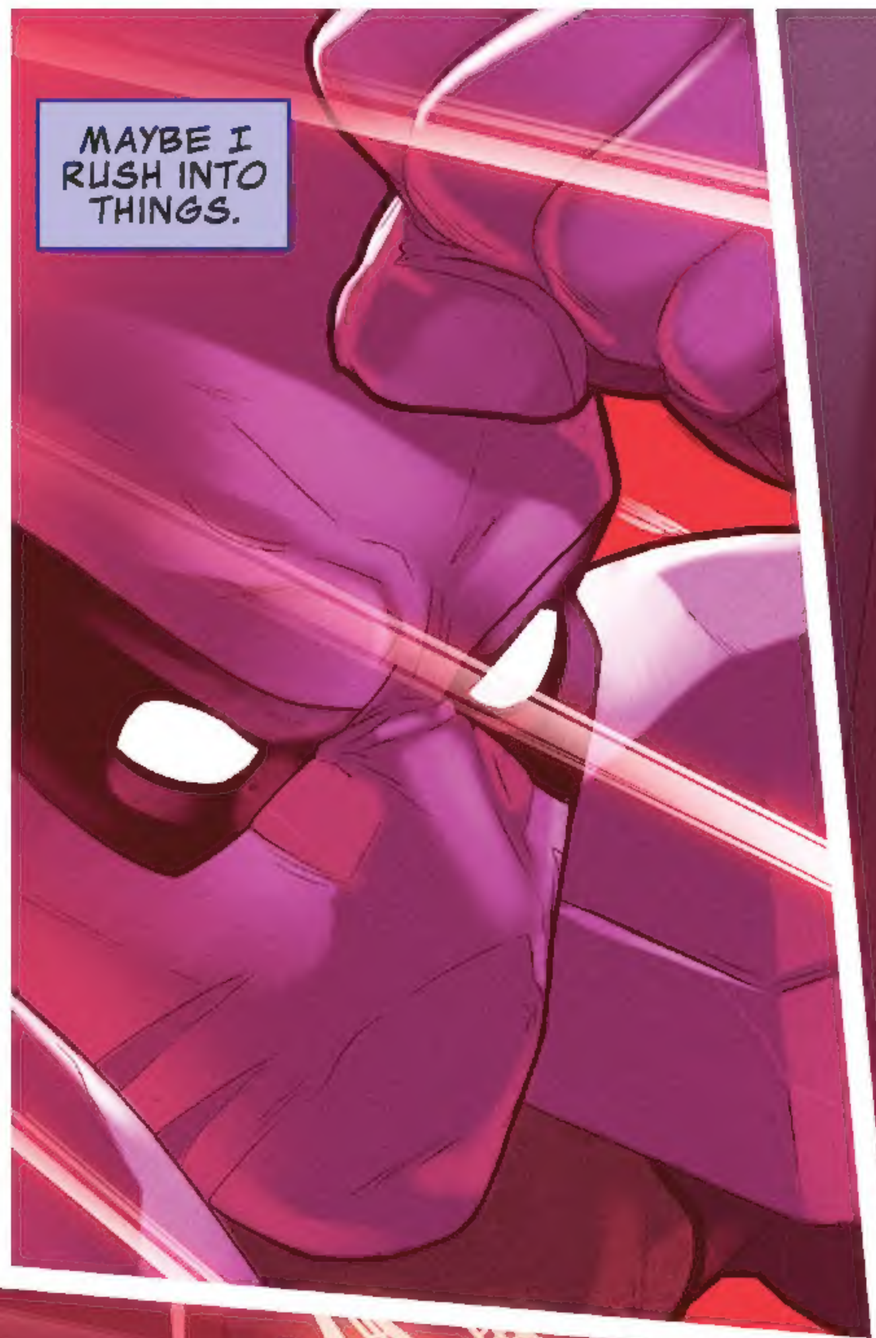
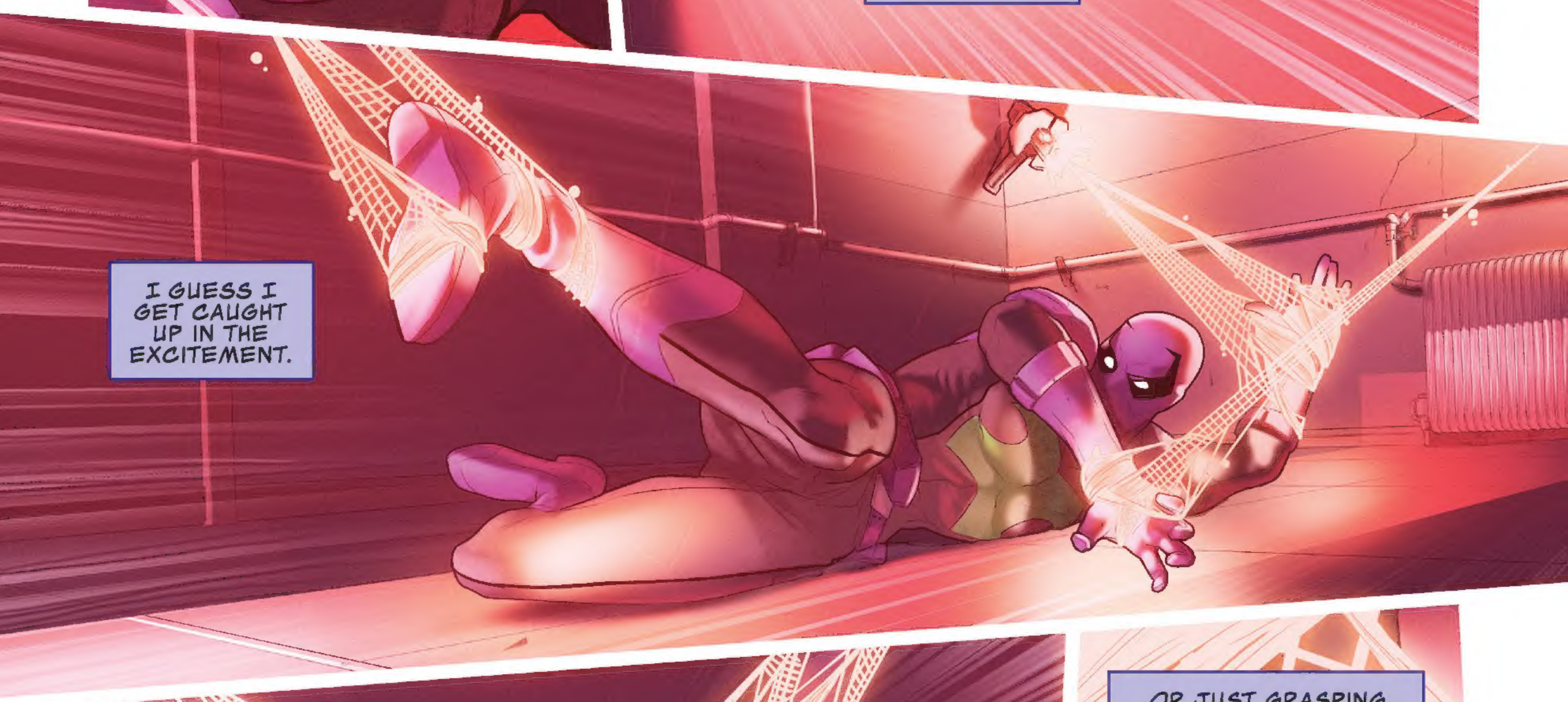
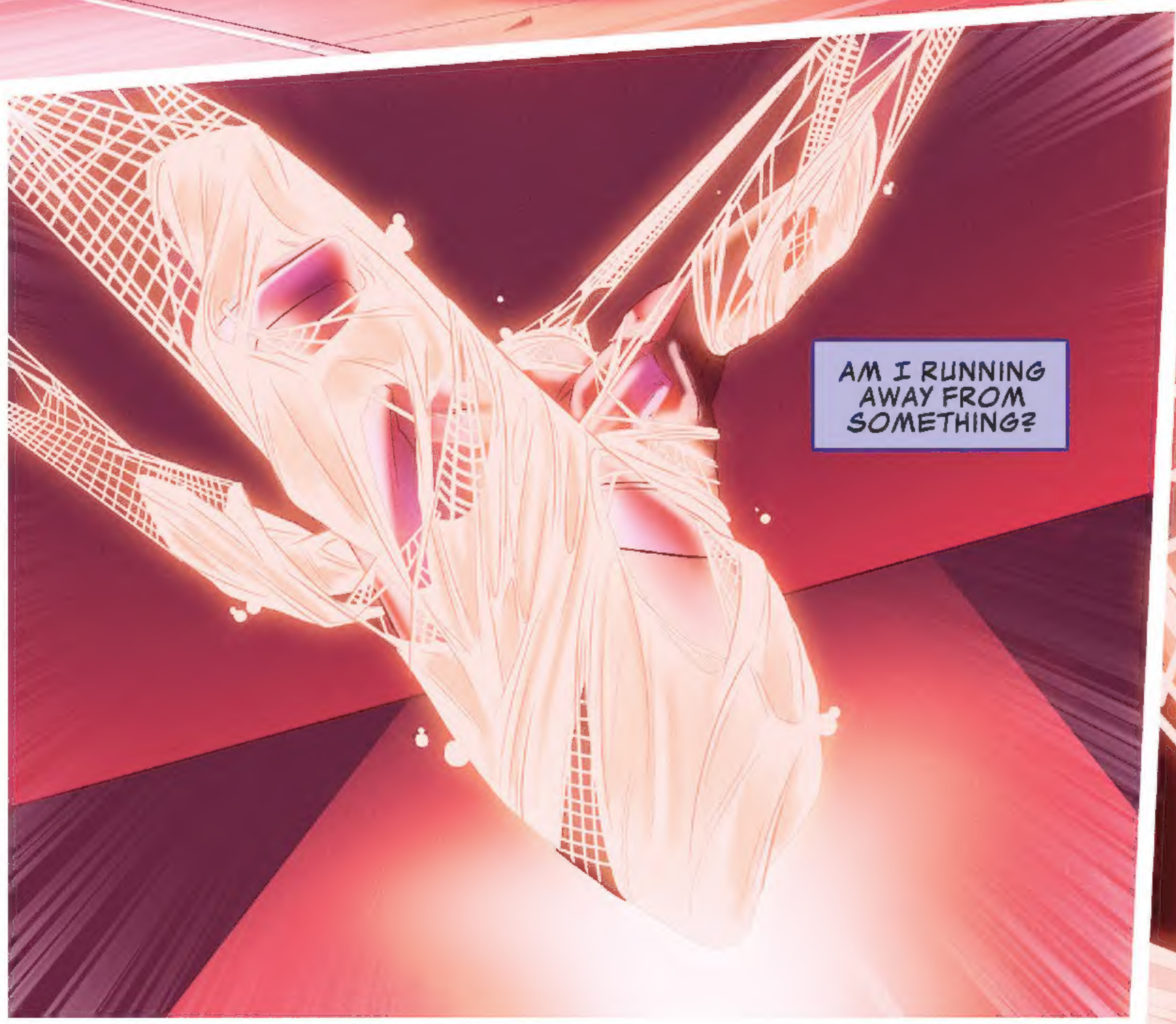
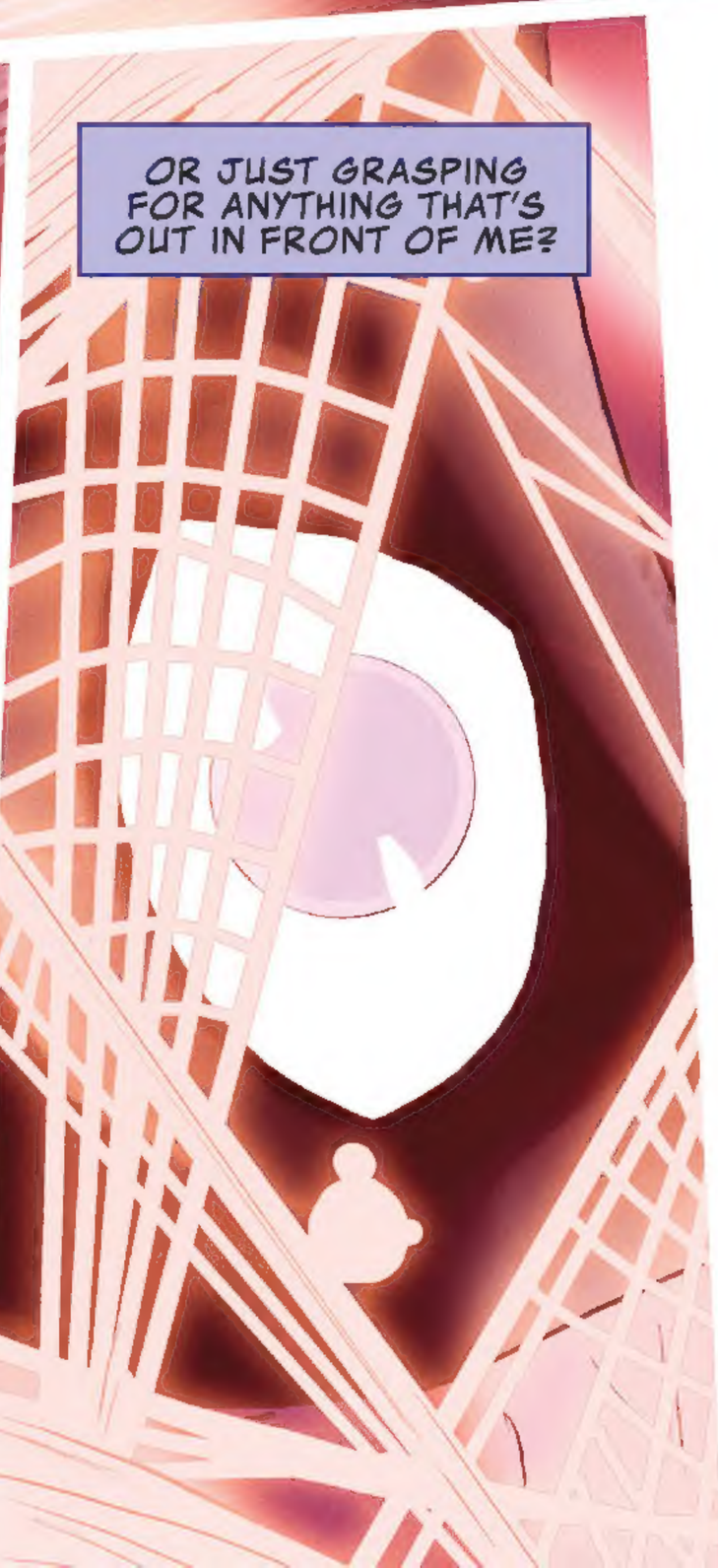

MAYBE I RUSH INTO THINGS.

MAYBE I JUMP IN HEAD-FIRST WITHOUT THINKING.


I GUESS I GET CAUGHT UP IN THE EXCITEMENT.


AM I RUNNING AWAY FROM SOMETHING?


OR JUST GRASPING FOR ANYTHING THAT'S OUT IN FRONT OF ME?

ALL I KNOW IS...
...I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M DOING.
TO BE CONTINUED...

DEAD NO MORE:
THE CLONE CONSPIRACY
DON'T MISS
THE PROWLER
#2

ZONE